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The C-level agenda for airports

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Strategy, leadership, growth, and the future of aviation

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When did running an airport become running a city?

The airport CEO used to be a facility manager with a good suit. The job was infrastructure, throughput, and airline relationships. If the baggage system worked and the airlines paid their landing fees, you were doing well.

That job no longer exists.

At PTE World Conference 2026, the CEO sessions revealed something more interesting than a set of management best practices. They surfaced a structural transformation in what the airport chief executive actually does. The CEOs on stage in London were not talking about terminals. They were talking about workforce psychology, national economic policy, regional identity, cultural transformation, and the politics of public infrastructure. One of them explicitly stated that airlines are not his top priority. Another described his role as being “the mayor of the airport.” A third was designing a terminal around the identity of a 200-year-old Viennese bakery.

This report draws on the CEO and leadership sessions to argue eight theses about what has changed in airport leadership, why it changed, and what it means for the next decade. The tone is deliberately forward-looking. The industry does not need another summary of what happened. It needs an honest account of what is coming.

1. The $175 billion infrastructure gap grew while the industry was talking about it

A decade ago, the estimated infrastructure investment needed at US airports was $80 billion. The most recent estimate is $175 billion. The gap did not shrink while the industry held conferences about it. It more than doubled.

Patrick Heck, vice president, Vantage Group, laid out the arithmetic with the kind of calm that makes the number more alarming, not less:

"Infrastructure investment needed at US airports was estimated at $80 billion a decade ago. The most recent estimate is $175 billion. Rather than getting smaller, that number continues to grow."

Patrick Heck, vice president, Vantage Group,

The problem is not that airports lack ambition. Manchester just completed a GBP 1.3 billion Terminal 2 expansion. Stansted has secured planning permission to grow from 30 million to 51 million passengers on a GBP 1.1 billion capital programme. United Airlines placed the largest aircraft order in aviation history during COVID, triggering a $2.5 billion Houston Terminal B expansion opening in October 2026. The problem is that the rate of investment is being outpaced by the rate of cost escalation and demand growth simultaneously.

Construction costs in the sector are growing at approximately 5-6% per year. Robert Walker, managing director - corporate real estate, United Airlines, quantified what delay actually costs:

"Every $100 million we shifted from later years into spend now saves 6% annual cost growth. That's $6 million for every year we decided to invest earlier."

Robert Walker, managing director - corporate real estate, United Airlines

The math is simple and punishing: waiting is the most expensive decision an airport can make.

But public airport authorities cannot fund the backlog alone. The private sector's role has evolved from opportunistic public-private partnership to systemic necessity. Gerrard Bushell, chairman and partner, Carlyle Airport Group (CAG), who led the New Terminal One programme at JFK, identified the real bottleneck:

"You need someone at the very top of the food chain who says: here's the vision, here's the expectation, and now I'm going to clear a pathway. And a cleared pathway ain't so clear."

Gerrard Bushell, chairman and partner, Carlyle Airport Group (CAG)

Political champions, not architects or financiers, are the critical success factor for infrastructure delivery. LaGuardia Terminal B went from being ranked one of the worst terminals in the US to the best under Vantage's development. The catalyst was not design. It was a governor who decided it would happen.

Looking ahead: The airports that close the gap will be the ones that move capital forward, not the ones that wait for perfect certainty. The "max build" philosophy, designing for the next 15-20 years rather than solving today's problem, is replacing incremental expansion as the dominant strategy for serious operators.

2. Employees before airlines: The CEO priority shift that nobody predicted

One of the most striking statements at PTE World Conference 2026 did not come from a panel on disruption or AI. It came from the CEO of the world's fourth-busiest origin-and-destination airport.

John Ackerman, chief executive officer, Los Angeles World Airports, said it without hedging:

"I stood up and said the airlines are not my priority. I'm going to put my employees in front of you every time. If our employees can't be successful, there's no way they can help our airlines."

John Ackerman, chief executive officer, Los Angeles World Airports

This was not a soft statement about employee engagement. It was a structural reordering of stakeholder priority at one of the most complex airport operations on Earth. And he was not alone. The moderator, summarising the consensus of the CEO panel, described it as the emergence of a new archetype: "The airport CEO is the mayor of the airport. The starting point is to take care of the interests of the constituents, which starts with employees."

Roel Huinink, chief executive officer, JFK International Air Terminal, described the "T4 State of Mind" programme, which gives frontline staff real-time operational data and decision-making authority. An airline customer told him afterwards:

"Airports are no longer defined only by their hardware: the infrastructure and technology, but more so by their 'heartware': the people, experiences, and sense of place that give them their soul"

Roel Huinink, chief executive officer, JFK International Air Terminal

At Milan's SEA Aeroporti, Armando Brunini, CEO, SEA Società Esercizi Aeroportuali, described HR directors becoming marketing directors towards employees, because attracting talent to shift-based roles at airports far from city centres requires the same strategic thinking as attracting passengers. SEA runs a technical high school classroom inside the airport.

John Ackerman, chief executive officer, Los Angeles World Airports, went further. He may be, in his own words, "the first CEO never to expand the airport and build giant new buildings. I really don't care about that. I'm not interested in ribbon cuttings. I'm interested in leaving the employees with a sustainable culture."

The employee-first thesis is not sentimental. LAX's workforce was still 20% below pre-COVID levels as recently as two years ago. When you cannot staff the operation, the terminal is irrelevant. Culture is infrastructure.

Looking ahead: The CEOs who build lasting institutions in the next decade will be the ones who treat employee experience as a capital investment, not an HR programme. Robert Lowe, chief people and culture officer, Los Angeles World Airports, set a three-year arc: Year 1, best city department HR; Year 2, top-ranked airport in industry; Year 3, one of the best places to work in Southern California. That is a CEO-level commitment, not a training budget.

3. The talent crisis is not a labour shortage. It is existential

Frankfurt Airport will lose 25% of its facility management staff to retirement within 10 years. Hong Kong International Airport's workforce must grow from 70,000 to 100,000 in the same period, in one of the world's most expensive labour markets, while a fourth runway is structurally impossible. LAX inherited a civil service "post and pray" hiring environment with limited strategic talent acquisition, HR business partner structures, performance management, and human resources information systems.

These are not HR problems. They are existential operating risks.

Michael Jahn, senior specialist facility management, Fraport AG, captured the new skill requirement precisely:

"Not every mechanic has to learn how to code. But they have to know when to rely on data and when intuition is still the best way to handle a problem. Bringing those together is the hybrid skill match we have to find in the future."

Michael Jahn, senior specialist facility management, Fraport AG

The responses from the most serious operators are structural, not incremental. Munich Airport's academy runs a 26-module, 4-month programme that produces "generalist before specialist" operations staff. Joern Krafft, director - international training and consulting, Munich Airport, described the philosophy with an analogy from his own career transition from cockpit to terminal: a pilot who "doesn't care what's going on at the airport, just wants to depart on time" has the same cognitive tunnel as every other specialist. The Munich Operations Specialist programme breaks that tunnel deliberately, creating cross-department relationships and shared language that become the cultural infrastructure for resilient operations.

Steven Yiu, executive director of airport operations, Airport Authority Hong Kong, was characteristically direct about the arithmetic:

"Currently we have 70,000 workforce working at the airport. Projected another 10 years later, really 100,000 workforce. Can we afford it? This is question number one. So we have to do something to reduce the reliance on labour."

Steven Yiu, executive director of airport operations, Airport Authority Hong Kong

At Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport, Gina Stough, vice president - human resources, CVG Airport Authority / Cincinnati Northern Kentucky Airport, reframed airport HR as regional economic infrastructure. CVG discovered that workers living 15 minutes from the airport faced two-hour bus commutes through downtown Cincinnati. The airport partnered with the regional transit authority plus Amazon and DHL to reroute bus service. They piloted Kentucky's childcare subsidy programme. They established two aviation mechanics schools on campus. Peter Gargiulo, president, 4QD Strategy Consulting, who worked with CVG, put it directly:

"A shotgun approach to finding your future workforce just isn't going to cut it anymore."

Peter Gargiulo, president, 4QD Strategy Consulting

Looking ahead: The airports that solve the talent crisis will not be the ones that offer better salaries. They will be the ones that remove the barriers that prevent people from showing up: transport, childcare, training accessibility, and a culture that does not require workers to silently adapt to environments that were never designed for them. Jenny McLaughlin at Heathrow named this gap directly: "Who has to work harder to stay safe and who is silently adapting, masking or compensating?".

4. UK aviation's GBP 3 billion congestion premium and the case for coordinated growth

The UK handled a record 302.5 million passengers in 2025. The five airports represented on the UK aviation panel collectively account for 60% of that throughput. And yet, the most revealing number was not about volume. It was about cost.

A GBP 3 billion congestion premium is not a talking point. It is a quantified national economic drag caused by indecision. The third runway would add GBP 17 billion annually to the UK economy, with 60% of the benefit felt outside London. Heathrow is worth more than GBP 30 billion as a business and invested GBP 1.1 billion in its supply chain in 2024, working with over 1,100 businesses, 60% of which are SMEs.

But the panel made clear that Heathrow expansion alone is not the answer. Pierre-Hugues Schmit, chief executive, London Gatwick, called for a "level playing field," a pointed reference to the competitive asymmetry created by expansion approval after Gatwick completed its own full planning process for a second runway. Andrew Bell, CEO, Regional & City Airports, argued that regional airports are "the foundation of UK aviation, not its periphery," training pilots, maintaining aircraft, and serving as test beds for future flight technology.

Chris Woodroofe, managing director, Manchester Airport, offered the most honest assessment of the sustainability trade-off: SAF and carbon costs will reduce the rate of aviation growth to 2050 versus an unconstrained scenario. That admission, made publicly by a major airport CEO, is significant. It reframes sustainability not as compatible with unlimited growth but as a managed constraint that requires the industry to be more strategic about where growth happens.

Andy Cliffe, CEO, London City Airport, demonstrated what that strategy looks like in practice: a consultation to extend aircraft range would remove approximately 76,000 flights while growing passenger numbers through larger aircraft. Fewer movements, more passengers, lower carbon intensity. That is not a compromise. It is a better model.

Looking ahead: UK aviation's next decade depends on whether the industry can move from competitive fragmentation to coordinated capacity planning. Airspace modernisation is the hidden capacity unlock. The SAF mandate is a growth enabler if the price gap closes. But the politics of infrastructure remain harder than the engineering, and the cultural contestation of aviation's legitimacy is now reaching schools.

5. Asia's 600 million passenger opportunity and the airports racing to capture it

India's aviation market is projected to become the world's third largest within three years. The domestic passenger forecast for 2030 is 600 million. Air travel penetration stands at just 5%. Aviation growth runs at 1.5 times GDP growth because, as Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport, explained:

"With economic growth and rising disposable income, people upgrade from train travel to air travel."

Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport

The scale of the opportunity is matched by the scale of the structural challenge. Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport, revealed the number that defines Delhi's hub ambition:

"For North America, only 11% of Indian travellers used to go through direct flight. 89% used to connect over either the Middle East or Europe."

Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport

That 89% leakage is the market Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport, is building to capture. The airport has expanded to 105 million passenger capacity across four runways. It now has more weekly connectivity to North America and Europe than Singapore. Intra-India to international connectivity has grown threefold in the past four to five years. But Videh Kumar Jaipuriar was candid about the gap:

"For us to be really called a successful hub, we possibly need five slot banks in the next five years. Currently we've moved to three."

Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO, Delhi International Airport

In Hong Kong, the constraint is physical. Steven Yiu, executive director of airport operations, Airport Authority Hong Kong, was unusually blunt for an airport director:

"Building a fourth runway? I can almost assume that this is impossible for Hong Kong. A lot of land constraints and legal constraints."

Steven Yiu, executive director of airport operations, Airport Authority Hong Kong

HKIA completed its three-runway system in 2024, achieving 102 air traffic movements per hour and capacity for 120 million passengers. But with Shenzhen handling 60 million passengers and Guangzhou handling 80 million, both within an hour of HKIA, the Greater Bay Area's 86 million population and $14.5 trillion GDP are being contested by airports that are still building.

HKIA's response is to extend its effective catchment through intermodal integration: automated car parks at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, upstream immigration clearance, and an autonomous logistics connection to the Hong Kong port. The airport is, in Steven Yiu's formulation, "transforming from a city airport into an airport city."

Business travel's share at Delhi has dropped from 30-35% pre-COVID to 20-22%. Leisure and visiting-friends-and-relatives traffic now represents 70-75%. The first-time flyer metric is the leading indicator: as long as it keeps growing, India stays above trend.

Looking ahead: Asia's airport wars will be won by the operators who solve the transfer experience, not the ones who build the most gates. Delhi's push for single-security domestic-to-international transfers, HKIA's intermodal catchment expansion, and Bangalore's hub development programme are all variants of the same thesis: connectivity quality beats capacity quantity.

6. Focus beats scale: The secondary airport advantage

The most confident CEO at PTE World Conference 2026 ran an airport handling 7 million passengers.

Atif Elkadi, chief executive officer, Ontario International Airport, said it plainly:

"Focus beats scale. We don't really worry about what everybody else is doing per se. We're focused on ourselves, focused on what we can do for our community."

Atif Elkadi, chief executive officer, Ontario International Airport

Ontario sits in a Southern California multi-airport ecosystem that mirrors London's: five airports serving overlapping catchments. Atif Elkadi, chief executive officer, Ontario International Airport's pitch was not about competing with LAX. It was about capturing the 10 million people who live or work closer to Ontario than to any other airport:

"There are 24 million people living in Southern California. 10 million of them live or work closer to ONT than any other airport in Southern California. There is absolutely no reason for them not to utilise our airport."

Atif Elkadi, chief executive officer, Ontario International Airport

Ontario was named best airport in North America in its passenger category. The competitive moat is convenience and community identity, not scale.

Stansted tells a parallel story from the other side of the Atlantic. Mike Hardaker, chief asset and development officer, Stansted Airport, described the transformation since Manchester Airports Group took over: 30 million passengers through a single terminal and a single runway, 200+ destinations, over a million self-connecting passengers, and a 70-minute door-to-city-centre journey time. The GBP 1.1 billion capital programme targets growth to 43 million, with permission secured for 51 million. The UK Innovation Corridor, anchoring Cambridge's biomedical cluster, Huawei, and Microsoft, gives Stansted a premium business case that has nothing to do with being London's cheapest airport.

In Barbados, Piétrick Voyer, director of operations, Grantley Adams International Airport, demonstrated something even more radical. Grantley Adams International Airport handles 2.4 million passengers with the same infrastructure it used for 2.3 million. Passenger experience scores went up. Staff satisfaction scores went up. Nothing was built. Everything was changed. Piétrick Voyer's explanation:

"It's not because you have an increase of passengers that automatically you have a reduction of customer experience. Same infrastructure, same staff. We did not expand. But we changed processes."

Piétrick Voyer, director of operations, Grantley Adams International Airport

For a single-airport island nation where 94-95% of all visitors pass through the terminal and 60-70% of the economy derives from tourism, the airport is not infrastructure. It is the front door of the national economy. Piétrick Voyer trained 100% of airport staff through a community mindset programme within two years, including taxi drivers.

Looking ahead: The secondary airport advantage is structural, not temporary. In a world where mega-hubs are constrained by airspace, politics, and cost, airports that can deliver focus, identity, and community connection will capture disproportionate growth. The question is not whether these airports can compete. It is whether they can resist the temptation to become the thing they are beating.

7. Culture eats strategy: The transformation playbook from LAX to Berlin

LAX is three years into a transformation that has nothing to do with concrete.

When Robert Lowe, chief people and culture officer, Los Angeles World Airports, arrived as Chief People and Culture Officer in April 2024, the airport had no strategic talent acquisition, no performance management system, and no HRIS. The hiring process followed a traditional civil service model. Lowe's CEO had started two months earlier with a single instruction: passenger experience and employee experience are the same investment.

"If you really want to build a sustainable transformation, you have to invest in both at the same time. Not one before the other."

Robert Lowe, chief people and culture officer, Los Angeles World Airports

Courtney Moore, assistant general manager, Los Angeles World Airports, described the creative strategy: each terminal is themed around a distinct LA neighbourhood story, generating a specific emotional response. The 2028 Olympics are the forcing function: a "no-build, no-drive" event that will require Angelenos to change how they reach the airport. The automated people mover launch is both infrastructure and behaviour change campaign.

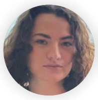
In Finland, Finavia's approach to airports as experience hubs has embedded cultural identity into every design decision. Vienna Airport's Julian Jager took yet another approach – encouraging international operators to carry local brands:

"80 to 90% of the space which we've given out is going to local F&B brands – mainly with international F&B operators. So 50 to 60% is operated by big international F&B operators, but the brands are mainly family businesses with a history up to 200 years in Vienna."

Julian Jager, Vienna Airport

Including family businesses with histories of up to 200 years. The risk, Julian acknowledged, is real: large F&B operators move staff between brands, diluting authenticity. The response is constant landlord oversight and a willingness to pay the management cost of maintaining identity.

At Berlin Brandenburg Airport, something unexpected happened. Two Gen Z facility management professionals, Lisa Braun, senior manager of facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg (Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg) and Paul Klonowsky, expert for special projects and policies in facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg (Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg GmbH), opened their presentation by addressing the room's assumptions directly:




“We know some of you are scared that airport FM is in danger because we as Gen Z are way too focused on our mental health or work-life balance. We hopefully can take that fear today and show you how we can contribute to a better, innovative future.”

Lisa Braun, senior manager of facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg, and Paul Klonowsky, expert for special projects and policies in facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg

They then presented a technically rigorous reorganisation of BER’s facility management that took the airport from chaotic to structured without changing the building:

“What once looked chaotic is now structured. What once felt reactive is now strategically steered. And what once required a mop and a bucket now runs on data, alignment and clear operating models.”

Lisa Braun, senior manager of facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg, and Paul Klonowsky, expert for special projects and policies in facility management, BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg

BER, which opened in 2020 after years of delay, now handles 26 million passengers and was named the world’s most improved airport.

Hayley Bartholomew, senior project manager – strategic change and transformation, Manchester Airports Group, described the challenge of transforming engineering-culture leaders who are “used to being out on site and in physical roles” into change agents. The answer was not corporate training sessions. It was going to meet them where they are, with locally adapted approaches for each airport in the MAG portfolio.

Looking ahead: Culture transformation is not a programme with an end date. It is an operating discipline. The airports that sustain it will be the ones that embed it in how decisions are made, not in how training is delivered. LAX’s three-year arc, Munich’s academy model, and Barbados’s community mindset framework all share a common feature: senior leadership that treats culture as the primary infrastructure investment.

8. The CEO as public figure: Why the job now requires a political voice

Lord Sharpe of Epsom, Shadow Minister for Business and Trade, opened PTE World Conference 2026 with numbers that belong in a national economic policy debate: aviation generates nearly $1 trillion in industry revenues globally. UK airports handled a record 302 million passengers. The industry directly supports 500,000 UK jobs and contributes GBP 120 billion to GDP. Heathrow alone exports 50,000 tonnes of salmon per year.

These are not operational statistics. They are arguments for political relevance. And he was making them deliberately because the political legitimacy of aviation is being contested at a cultural level.

Lord Sharpe referenced a newspaper article about "teachers brainwashing pupils against aviation." The framing is provocative, but the underlying dynamic is real: the next generation's relationship with flying is being shaped in classrooms, not departure lounges. Aviation accounts for 11 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, but the industry has not made that case effectively to the public that will decide its future.

Andrew Bell, CEO, Regional & City Airports, went further:

"The industry has basically stayed pretty much the same for 80 years. We find ourselves now dislocated from that and needing to find new ways much quicker than the industry has evolved historically."
Andrew Bell, CEO, Regional & City Airports

The CEO-as-public-figure thesis is not about media training. It is about the recognition that airport decisions are now political decisions. Heathrow's third runway is not an engineering problem. It is a decades-long political negotiation that has cost the UK economy GBP 3 billion per year in congestion premiums. Manchester Airport's ownership structure, 65% held by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, creates a fundamentally different alignment between airport and city than private ownership. London City's consultation to grow passengers while reducing flights is a political proposition dressed as an operational one.

The airports that will thrive in the next decade will be led by CEOs who can hold a room of investors, a press conference, a parliamentary committee, and a community meeting with equal conviction. The facility manager era is over.

Looking ahead: The SAF mandate, Air Passenger Duty, business rates, employment regulation, and climate policy are all converging on airport CEOs simultaneously. The ones who treat these as external constraints will be overtaken by the ones who treat them as the strategic landscape in which they compete. As Chris Woodroofe, managing director, Manchester Airport put it:

"You can't stop for sandwiches and lie in the sun. Every year you don't make progress makes the next 20 years a much bigger mountain to climb."
Chris Woodroofe, managing director, Manchester Airport

Conclusion: The job has changed. Has the industry noticed?

The CEO sessions at PTE World Conference 2026 did not produce a consensus. They produced a picture of an industry in the middle of a leadership transformation that most of its institutions have not yet caught up with.

The airport CEO of 2026 is simultaneously a civic leader, a talent strategist, a political advocate, a cultural architect, and an infrastructure developer. The job requires fluency in workforce psychology, national economic policy, sustainability science, and community engagement. It requires the honesty to say, as Steven Yiu, executive director of airport operations, Airport Authority Hong Kong said, that a fourth runway is impossible. It requires the patience to say, as Piétrick Voyer, director of operations, Grantley Adams International Airport said, that process change matters more than building change.

Five structural shifts define the CEO agenda for the next decade:

1. Capital must move faster.

The $175 billion US infrastructure gap is growing at 5-6% per year. Delay is the most expensive decision. Political champions and private capital structures that transfer risk are the delivery model, not public agency incrementalism.

2. Talent is the binding constraint.

Not capital, not technology, not regulation. The airports that solve the talent crisis will solve it by removing barriers to participation: transport, childcare, inclusive design, and cultures that do not require workers to adapt to environments that were never designed for them.

3. Culture is infrastructure.

LAX, Munich, Barbados, and Manchester all demonstrated that operational performance follows cultural investment. The airports that treat culture as a programme will lose to the airports that treat it as the operating system.

4. Focus beats scale.

Ontario, Stansted, and Barbados are outperforming on experience, identity, and community connection. In a capacity-constrained world, the secondary airport advantage is structural.

5. The CEO must have a public voice.

Aviation's political legitimacy is being contested in classrooms, parliaments, and editorial pages. The CEOs who retreat to operational management will find their operating environment shaped by people who do not understand it. The ones who engage will shape it themselves.

> The aircraft are on order. The passengers are coming. The terminals can be built. The question, as it was across every session at PTE World Conference 2026, is whether the leadership is ready for a job that no longer resembles the one the industry trained them for.

Appendix: Sessions referenced

REPORT SECTION	SESSIONS
The $175B infrastructure gap	Panel discussion: Delivering private airport development programs in a capacity-constrained environment (Vantage Group; United Airlines; Carlyle Airport Group (CAG)); Opening address (House of Lords); Keynote speech (Heathrow Airport)
Employees before airlines	Panel discussion: From gatekeepers to game-changers – rewriting the global airport CEO agenda (Los Angeles World Airports; JFK International Air Terminal; SEA Società Esercizi Aeroportuali); Putting the LA back in LAX (Los Angeles World Airports)
The talent crisis	Panel discussion: Demographic and technological change in facility management (Fraport AG; Narita International Airport Corporation); How Munich Airport empowers operations specialists of the future (Munich Airport); Fireside chat: Building tomorrow's aviation workforce – collaborative strategies for success (CVG Airport Authority/Cincinnati Northern Kentucky Airport; 4QD Strategy Consulting); Fireside chat: Staff experience - what's it like working at an airport? (Heathrow Airport)
UK aviation	Panel discussion: Unlocking UK Aviation Potential - Shared Goals for Growth and Expansion (Heathrow; London Gatwick; Manchester Airport; Regional & City Airports; London City Airport); Opening address (House of Lords); Keynote speech (Heathrow Airport)
Asia's 600M passenger opportunity	Panel discussion: Hub development across Asia and Pacific (Delhi International Airport; Bangalore International Airport Limited); Transforming HKIA: innovation, seamlessness and excellence in passenger experience (Airport Authority Hong Kong); Digital transformation at Changi: the making of Terminal X (Changi Airport Group)
Focus beats scale	Panel discussion: STN and ONT – finding their niche in a multi-airport ecosystem (Stansted Airport; Ontario International Airport); The Cs: how to build a committed, sustainable airport community (Grantley Adams International Airport)
Culture eats strategy	Putting the LA back in LAX (Los Angeles World Airports); Fireside chat: Airports as Experience Hubs: A Conversation with Vienna Airport (Vienna International Airport); Gen Z decodes airport FM: organization, processes and digital vibes (BER Airport Berlin Brandenburg); The human side of airport transformation: people, not just processes (Manchester Airports Group); How Munich Airport empowers operations specialists of the future (Munich Airport)
The CEO as public figure	Opening address (House of Lords); Keynote speech (Heathrow Airport); Panel discussion: Unlocking UK Aviation Potential - Shared Goals for Growth and Expansion; Panel discussion: From gatekeepers to game-changers – rewriting the global airport CEO agenda; Panel discussion: Future-ready airports – building resilience and profitability globally (Brisbane Airport Corporation; Royal Schiphol Group)

Based on sessions and discussions at PTE World Conference 2026, London